1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

killed, but sought only for lack of all other game. Because of its reputed destruction of snakes the people like to keep it tame in the village. Though I have never observed these birds at this, a tame specimen once gave me a demonstration of its procedure when mistaking my leather belt, which had accidentally dropped, for a snake. Furiously pouncing on the strap, the sariema[1] seized the buckle with its bill, swung it in the air, and lashed it two or three times against the ground in a manner that would inevitably have cracked a snake's spine. Only then did the attacker recognize its error and let the belt alone. Falcons are killed in large numbers when the steppe grass is burnt in June and these birds immediately foregather in order to hunt the startled grasshoppers, lizards, and other small species. Falcons are sought both for their flesh and their downy feathers, which play a great part in Eastern Timbira ceremonial.

Snakes are killed with any handy stick, except that a sucurijú, which has the thickness of a human thigh, requires a sizable club.

Game of agouti size, or larger, is carried home in a palm-leaf basket plaited *ad hoc*. First the hunter plaits the back of the container, deposits the animal on it, and then interlaces the leaflets over it. The tip of a monkey's tail is pulled through its lower jaw and the game is then hung over's one shoulder. A man will tie together a deer's feet, put his head through the ring thus formed, and carry his kill home on his back.

The Rąmkõ'kamekra, too, as noted by Snethlage,[200] drags large game no farther than the village boundary, whence his wife carries it home.

In general the Timbira are still skillful at hunting, exhibiting marked ability to interpret footprints and great perseverance in pursuing wounded animals. A good hunter is prized all the more nowadays because lack of game renders the chase progressively less productive. He is a much coveted husband: I once overheard a Rąmkõ'kamekra reproving his infatuated niece as follows, "You want to marry *him*! What sort of game has *he* ever shot?"

Collective hunting accompanies the festivals, especially the period preceding the terminal celebration, which always requires a large quantity of meat pies. Since this closing ceremony is determined by the council when the duration of the festival is deemed sufficient, this decision likewise involves the signal for collective hunting. This devolves exclusively on the festive societies and age classes that participated in the festival. Each group is accompanied by the two associated girl auxiliaries, who are sometimes joined by several female age mates, especially of the "wanton" class. At least one man of more mature age invariably goes along in order to advise the younger people and to see to the preservation of ceremonial rules. He has the prerogative of eating the brains of animals killed, this diet being tabooed to the young people. The oldest woman of the society—contrary to Snethlage's observation—does not dream of permitting herself to be loaded down with kitchen utensils to be brought to the hunters' assembly. Old women calmly wait in the village for whatever food their sons or sons-in-law are morally obliged to bring them. I am further puzzled by the function of the cords and ropes (both of tucum fiber) with which, according to the same investigator, every hunter provides himself.

In the collective hunting trips, too, the tamhą'k (p. 98) play a part, attempting to increase the yield of the undertaking by first performing certain actions. Indeed, they even tried to improve the quality of the slain game by their magical influence. If animals were to be surrounded with the aid of firing, a tamhą'k had to be the first to light the fire. He and his fellows, however, did not take part in the ensuing drive.

[200] Meine Reise, 465.

[1] [i.e. the sariema --- Analyst]

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

Accordingly rape was unknown, the only contrary instance being that of an Indian who had been intoxicated to senselessness in a Neobrazilian house; on the way home he ravished his twelve-year old daughter, but on coming to he had not the slightest recollection of his deed.

DAILY DANCES

The relations of the young people of opposite sex are best illustrated by their joint dances in the plaza, which normally take place three times every day during the ceremonial season. The party includes as participants:

1. The precentor, ikrérekaté. Of this category the Canella have two or three good representatives and a number of mediocre ones. The younger ones who show talent are instructed by the older precentors, at whose side they appear. A worthy precentor requires a good voice, a good memory for the innumerable dance songs, and bodily endurance. His instrument is the dance rattle, ko'tõi, made of the rind, usually painted red, of a *Crescentia cuiete*, mounted on a wooden handle that projects above as an elongated tip, by which the rattle can be planted in the ground (pl. 32, *b*, *c*). At the grip end a rectangular hole in the handle permits the insertion of a plaited wrist loop, which has a long tassel. The precentor is by no means a medicine-man nor has his rattle the slightest religious significance, as Abreu erroneously assumes.[109]

A remarkable description of the rattle wielded by a Põrekamekra precentor is given by Pohl: "This [precentor] carried in his right hand a ¾-yard-long staff along which a blackened coconut shell could be pushed up and down by the movement of the body. Within the shell were maize kernels, which produced a loud noise." I have never seen such an instrument, which recalls the "taran" observed by Snethlage among the Moré of the upper Madeira region. But Pohl does not seem to have closely viewed the object he describes, for it could hardly have been a "coconut shell" and the "maize kernels" were presumably the black pamtiį seeds which both the Eastern and Western Timbira exclusively use and specially cultivate for this purpose.

The precentor generally wears a forehead band, a neck band with a tassel for the back of the neck, sashes across the chest, sometimes cotton bracelets—never a loincloth such as Jurandyr Paes Leme paints in representing a Ponto dance.[110]

2. The precentress, mehõkrepúi, has already been referred to (p. 97).

3. The girls from about their seventh year until at least their first pregnancy. Many a woman eagerly participates even subsequently so far as the care of her infant permits. On the other hand, women of the critical age or grandmothers never take part.

4. The males comprise at least the older members of the unofficial boys' class and the two junior official classes, mepantúa.

If the youths are otherwise engaged, the girls will dance by themselves, but this is certainly not the normal thing, contrary to what might be inferred from Snethlage's and Abreu's reports, both of which mention only the dancing girls and the precentor, saying nothing about the participation of young men. Indeed, Snethlage goes so far as to speak of a "women's dance."[111]

[109] Frões Abreu, Terra das Palmeiras, 180, 182.

[110] Frões Abreu, op. cit., 182. Pohl, Reise, 2:201. "Dieser trug in der Rechten einen drey viertel Ellen langen Stab, an welchem eine schwarz gefärbte Kokosschale durch die Bewegung des Körpers auf und niedergeschoben werden konnte. In der Schale waren Maiskörner, welche ein lautes Geräusche verursachten."

[111] Snethlage, Nordostbras. Ind., 180.

1: Nimuendajú 1-6 (1939-1956) 1946 SCG Timbira SCG

wakukrá iykapeáne." That is, approximately: "Grandfather! Give me a child so that I may be able to eat with him." Then the suppliant spreads the urucú on the inside of her thighs.

Kentapí did not take that much trouble. One morning she was sitting at home against the wall, eating some food from a gourd bowl, while the sun was shining in at the door, directly in front of her feet. She set down her bowl, stretched out both palms horizontally toward the sun, like a begging child, and without getting up said in a low tone: "pa'pám! iymã iykra ñoñgõ! pa'pám iykaprẽ', marwa'tó iykrí napá. Ka, iykaprẽne iymã iykrareñoñgõ, vamẽ iypa!" ("Our Father! Give me a child! Our Father, take pity on me, I am sitting here alone, eating. You, pity me, give me a child to eat with me!") On my request she subsequently repeated the words. "I wonder whether he will listen to your prayer?" I asked. "Surely," she answered, "look at Iromkré [Kentapí's younger sister], she also invoked him and is already pregnant." However, it was three years before Kentapí's prayer was fulfilled.

It is a striking fact that the girls of this tribe never have children before, and only several years after, marriage. This is regarded as normal by the Indians themselves, and the above-mentioned Iromkré, who conceived immediately after marriage, was considered exceptional. She was fifteen as a primipara, and her mother told me that she was really too young to bear children. Abortives, if used at all, are exceptional; nor, in my opinion, can the means employed to prevent menstruation be responsible for the lateness of pregnancy in the light of the earliness of sexual intercourse. For this purpose a girl will seat herself on a steppe tree the Neobrazilians call pau pombo (*Tapirira* sp.?) or drink the infusion of the scraped bark of pau candeia (*Cassia* sp.), which is also considered an abortive.

In any case Snethlage probably underestimates the age of mothers in setting that of Ramkõ'kamekra girls who already had a child at barely twelve;[20] or, possibly the child he had in mind was not the offspring of the girl with her. The youngest mother I saw was certainly Iromkré, whose age was between fourteen and fifteen.

OLD AGE

Old people are esteemed; a junior would not venture to address them by name as though they were of his own age, but will always apply a kinship term, calling them kedti or tẽ'ire (grandparent) even if there is no blood relationship. Children and young people never try to converse with their elders unsolicited; even when they have to make some communication to them, they usually remain standing before them in silence until asked to speak. In meeting old people on a narrow path, the younger ones make way to let them pass. I have never heard the frailty of old age derided or mocked. Old Krithỹ', though already hard of hearing and very myopic, would insist on occasionally going to the creek five to six kilometers beyond the village to try his luck as an angler. On these trips he went astray several times on the numerous trails criscrossing the steppe and was unable to find his way home. Then his grandsons or great-nephews trotted in his wake like hunting-dogs and jubilantly led him back by the hand.

I have pointed out (p. 94) that after a period of some forty years of athletic life all men of an age class ceremonially and automatically drop out of the sports activities to enter the council, which constitutes the real governing body of the tribe since the chiefs undertake nothing without their advice. Further, I have explained by many illustrations that after any ceremonial retreat a person must present himself to this assemblage before being reckoned a full-fledged member of society again.

[20] Snethlage, Beiso, 463.

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SCS Timbira SCS

this presentation always involving the gift of a gourd bowl of food or of a meat pie. At various other ceremonies the chiefs and elders also get meat pies and other victuals in the plaza.

At the close of the pepyé retreat in 1933 I witnessed a ceremony that publicly and formally expressed the principle that old women merit respect as much as old men. Ordinarily there is no feminine counterpart to the men's council in the plaza; but on that day the old women were invited by the councilors to take the male elders' places in the plaza, the councilors themselves withdrawing to a spot on the margin. Then two youths and a girl hauled in a huge meat pie on a mat and handed it over to the old women, who forthwith divided it up and ate it precisely in the manner of the councilors, whereupon they went home.

Among the Timbira the designation "old woman" or "woman" is never applied to men vituperatively.

BURIAL

As stated previously, a Canella, whenever possible, tries to die in his matrilineal home. In 1929 I saw relatives of a very old, sick woman exerting themselves to the utmost in order to get her home alive—an end accomplished only by dashing across the steppe with the patient, who was resting in a makeshift hammock. Several minutes after her arrival she died. In any case a corpse is never laid on a bier except in the maternal home.

A dying person is placed on mats in the middle of the house, with his feet toward the door. Except in the case of a prominent figure in the community no one but the next of kin customarily assembles around the patient. A brief lament uttered by his mother, aunt, grandmother, or sister announces his passing away. Thereupon his maternal and paternal kin, as well as his hąpín, assemble in the house of mourning, but the general lament by all present does not begin until about an hour later, with the preparation of the corpse, during which all sit round it on mats placed in juxtaposition.

The ablutions and ornamentation devolve on the deceased individual's special pinčwę'i or hąpín, but other hąpín also help. They cut his hair, pluck out his eyebrows, smooth his features, and put on his decorations. He is painted with urucú or—if a hąmrén—decorated with falcon down. The corpses of little children are taken into the nearest relatives' laps (including males) and bewailed. Individual lamentations now begin to swell into a chorus of blubbering and a loud, rapid, monotonous chant: "When you were still alive, I was very fond of you, but now I do not want you any more! Don't return here!" The widow and kinswomen of the deceased may weep themselves into a paroxysm of despair and attempt suicide, especially as the corpse is being carried outdoors. Suddenly seizing a tool or firebrand, the mourner may strike herself a terrific blow over the head or back. Or she may run into the space in front of the house and, precisely like her Guaraní and Apinayé sisters,[88] take a header (kamdočêp) against the hard ground, possibly breaking her neck. Many years ago a mother, seeing her dead child carried away, is said to have run into the steppe and hanged herself there. Men never commit suicide on this occasion, and generally only the maternal uncle and grandfather are conspicuous in lamentation.

At Konkré's little son's funeral I noted the order in which relatives sat round the corpse: Konkré was at the head, his mother Yątkré and her sister Kentapí at the feet, his wife and one of her sisters on the right side, his mother-in-law and another sister-in-law on the left. A little to one side was seated his father-in-law,

[88] Nimuendajú, The Apinayé, 151.